

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8468

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: DISAGREEMENTS ON LABOR UNITY

1. OPEN POLEMICS BETWEEN ANTONIO LAMA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED LABOR CONFEDERATION CGIL, AND RAFFAELE VANNI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LAY, NON-COMMUNIST UIL, CONTINUE TO CLOUD THE LABOR UNITY ISSUE. THE EXCHANGE FOLLOWS VANNI'S DECLARATION THAT LABOR UNITY OUGHT TO BE CONTAINED AT ITS PRESENT LEVEL. VANNI SUBSEQUENTLY SUCCEEDED IN GAINING MAJORITY ENDORSEMENT BY THE UIL GENERAL COUNCIL FOR THIS POSITION. (ROME'S 16236).

2. LAMA HAS SHARPLY CRITICIZED VANNI'S POSITION, ACCUSING HIM OF "IMMOBILISM" AND OF SEEKING TO UNDERMINE THE SOLIDARITY OF THE WORKING CLASS. HE MADE AN OPEN PITCH FOR REBELLION ON THE PART OF THE UIL SOCIALIST MINORITY. VANNI HAS RESPONDED IN KIND, DENOUNCING "THE ATTACH WHICH LAMA MOUNTS AGAINST THE UIL AND ITS MAJORITY, AND HIS ATTEMPT TO SEEK 'TO ENHANCE THE SUCCESS' OF CERTAIN ELEMENTS WITHIN UIL."

3. VANNI DID NOT ATTEND THE NOVEMBER 28 SESSION OF THE
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SECRETARIAT OF THE FEDERATION CGIL-CISL-UIL(CCU), SENDING

SECRETARIAT QUERENGHI IN HIS PLACE. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE MEETING SKIRTED THE ISSUE OF LABOR UNITY AND CONCENTRATED ON PLANS FOR THE DECEMBER 4 GENERAL STRIKE (ROME'S 16309). DR. FRANCO SIMONCINI, PRESIDENT OF UIL'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND A SOCIALIST, INFORMS US THAT THE PSI IS EXERTING MAXIMUM PRESSURE TO PUSH FOR LABOR UNITY. SIMONCINI IS RESISTING THIS PRESSURE, AND SAYS HE HAS THE UNSOLICITED SUPPORT OF OTHER UIL SOCIALISTS IN FAVORING THE VANNI LINE. CISL HAS BEEN RATHER SILENT DURING THIS LAMA-VANNI EXCHANGE, EXCEPT FOR STRONG DENUNCIATIONS OF LAMA'S "STRONG-ARM" TACTICS BY SARTORI.

4. COMMENT: VANNI APPEARS DETERMINED TO PERSEVERE. HIS POSITION, TOGETHER WITH THE TACTICS UNDERTAKEN AT TIMES BY CISL SECRETARY MARINI IN TANDEM WITH SARTORI AND OTHERS, IS HAVING THE EFFECT OF PUTTING THE BRAKES ON PLANS FOR ORGANIC MERGER OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS. THE NEXT CONFRONTATION ON THE ISSUE WILL BE THE DECEMBER 10-11 MEETING OF THE CCU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. VOLPE

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